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Steamboat Chartering.

R. F. Loper in self-defence
against the Aspersions of the
Senate Committee.





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Steamboat Chartering.

R. F. LOPER in Self-Defence against the Aspersions of the
Senate Committee.

HON. E. M. STANTON,

Secretary of War :

SIR :—On the 22d of December, 1862, a Select Committee of the Senate, with Mr. Grimes at its head, was appointed to inquire into the chartering of transport vessels for the Banks' Expedition, and also into the employment of transports generally. This Committee made one report to the Senate, which in no way affects me, and therefore I have nothing to say to it. They took much testimony with reference to another report, which *does* materially affect me, but before it was printed it found its way to THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE, and an abstract of this report was given to the world through that medium, in which I am branded as a swindler of the Government. Knowing that there was no foundation in truth for these charges, and hoping that the Committee would hear additional testimony before they reported to the Senate, I addressed the following letter to Mr. Grimes :

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 18, 1863.

HON. J. W. GRIMES, *Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Banks' Expedition, and other charters :*

SIR :—Conceiving that the public mind was grossly abused, and great injustice done to you as a Senator, and to me as a citizen, in your report, (etc., etc.,) so far as it relates to my connection with the public service, I respectfully ask you to read at your earliest leisure, the following papers which I propose to hand you :

First: The testimony of J. Edgar Thomson and S. Felton, showing that I was only a third party engaged in the chartering of vessels during the time I acted under Mr. Thomson, as assistant agent of the War Department, and that the prices of charters were satisfactory to those gentlemen, and that I would not and did not receive any compensation for my services, or even have my expenses paid, while acting as a Government agent.

Second: The testimony of Anthony Groves, Jr., stating that I did not charter any one of his Company's boats while I was acting as Government agent, and that I never received from him the value of \$1 for chartering, or for my influence in chartering, his or his Company's boats, and that he never paid me any money belonging to the Government; but that, on the contrary, had it not been for my influence in behalf of the Government, his Company would have received thousands of dollars more from Government than they did receive.

Third: The testimony of Capt. Wilmon Whilldin, setting forth that I never charged, and that he never paid me, the value of \$1, for chartering, nor for my influence in procuring a charter, for his steamers to the Government, from the time the Rebellion broke out to the 14th day of February, 1863.

Fourth: The testimony of Anthony Reybold, Esq., setting forth that I never charged him the value of \$1 for chartering, or using my influence to charter, all or any one of his steamers to the War Department.

The reading of these papers will enable you to correct errors into which you have unintentionally fallen, and to do justice to your own candor and my good name, which I hope you will take pleasure in doing.

If, when the Capital was in danger, the railroad obstructed, and no mode of transporting troops remained but by water, Mr. Thomson, Mr. Felton, and myself, paid too much for vessels, (which I do not admit we did,) the answer is that there was no time for higgling, and that dispatch was more important than economy.

The steamer *Metamora*, mentioned in your report as being chartered by me, is a mistake. I never chartered her, nor used my influence to have her chartered by any Government agent. I saw her for the first time at Washington, while I was superintending the embarkation of the Army of the Potomac. I went on board to rate her and ascertain the number of troops she would carry. She had then been in Government employ some weeks. The New York steamers referred to in the report could be only those that I collect the charter money of. I advanced the owners of these steamers \$32,000, and the charters were assigned over to me as collateral security for the moneys I advanced them. Since the time our troops were shot down in Baltimore—which was the time my services commenced—I have never charged the Government one cent for my services, nor have they ever paid me up to this date for my services or traveling expenses.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. F. LOPER.

This letter was placed in the hands of Mr. Grimes, with a request that he would read it, which he promised to do.

I then asked him when he would give me an answer, and he replied, "In one hour." I called on him at the appointed time, and he promised me he would read the evidence and do me justice, and fixed the hour of 12 M. the next day, to give me an answer. Next day, at the hour appointed, I called to receive his answer, and he returned me my papers, consisting of the letters and affidavits hereinafter set forth, and asked why the evidence was not furnished him before. I answered, that not knowing what had been said against me, I did not know that the evidence would be required. He said it was too late; he could not alter his report, as the Committee had been discharged. I conversed with him again at 2 o'clock, P. M., and asked him, for the sake of justice, to call his Committee together for one hour, to hear the additional evidence. He replied that he could not call the Committee together again, and would not if he could. I then told him I had the staff in my own hand, and should use it. Here ended my correspondence with Mr. Grimes. I had been accused as a swindler, tried and condemned without a hearing in the star-chamber of the Senate Committee, without even the gratification of knowing what the other members of the Committee, upon reading my evidence, thought of my case.

So far as I am personally concerned, these matters do not affect me; but I have a family whose destiny in life depends somewhat on my good name; I have thousands of old friends, both on the sea and on the land, who have given me their confidence for over forty years of my life; I have

a country in whose union and glory and prosperity I feel a deep interest, whose success depends on the integrity of her agents—all these demand at my hands a defence of my character, which I am bound to make before the world, in justice to them all. One cause of error which led this Committee astray, and enabled them to deceive others, is taking for granted that my agency for the War Department was perpetual, and that, being the perpetual agent of the Department, I was cut off from all my ordinary pursuits. The truth is simply this: I received my appointment from J. Edgar Thomson, on the 20th day of April, 1861, and was discharged on the 10th day of May following. This makes twenty days and no more in which I acted as assistant agent of the Department. After my agency for the War Department had expired, I was at liberty to pursue my ordinary calling like other men; and, having large collections of my own for vessels chartered to the Department, I was intrusted with the collection of large sums from others, for which I charged five per cent., the ordinary compensation received by commission merchants, agents, and attorneys. I had been in the habit for the last 13 years of paying at the rate of five per cent., for the collecting of from \$300.000 to \$350.000 per annum; and when I acted as agent for others, abundantly able to pay, there was no good reason why I should charge less, especially when I had advanced large sums of money to the owners of these vessels, for which, except in the single case of Capt. Whilldin, I charged nothing for the advances so made. The Committee have

chosen to set down the sums of money so received as commissions—as so much money taken out of the United States Treasury. Here is a new idea among business men. The Government owes A. on written contract, under seal, \$100.000. He employs B. to collect it, for which he charges five per cent., which amounts to \$5.000, leaving his client \$95.000. According to the logic of the Committee, this \$5.000 is stolen from the Treasury, and suits ought to be brought against the attorney to recover it back again. If the charges made by the Committee were specific, those charges would be easily answered. But they deal in vague generalities, always deceiving themselves and deceiving the public with the leading falsehood that I was constantly in the employment of the Government. The attack on me opens thus :

The testimony of Mr. Hall leads to an examination of Capt. Richard F. Loper, of Philadelphia, whom the Committee find to be in receipt of enormous revenue from the chartering of transports, derived partly from the commissions received on vessels where he acted at the same time as agent of the Government, and agent of the owners, partly from the charters of vessels belonging to transportation companies, of which he is a large stockholder, partly from vessels owned by himself, and chartered by or through himself, as Government agent, to the Government, partly from collections of money due to others on transportation account, and partly from his "influence." Mr. Hall testifies that he paid Loper \$13.000 at one time for "getting business for him." The business referred to was the chartering of several transports for the McClellan Expedition. In answer to the question, "How much, in addition to what you have already paid him (Loper,) do you consider yourself under equitable and mercantile obligation to pay him?" Hall replies "I should consider myself under obligation to pay him one-half—that is, 2½ per cent.—except on vessels chartered for the McClellan Expedition."

Now every business man knows that vessels are chartered, not only to the Government but to individuals, through the agency of brokers, who represent the owners. It is a

legitimate branch of commerce, as honest, honorable and useful, as a seat in the Senate. Every such broker so employed does for his principal the best he can in fairness, and, unless the party with whom he deals is ignorant or knavish, the transactions are fair. Mr. Hall was engaged in this business, working for the ordinary commissions, and, for any thing I knew at the time or now know, an honest, fair-dealing man. With this belief, I sent numerous persons to him who had steamers and vessels to charter, and he paid me various sums of money, from time to time, but what proportion they bore to his commissions I do not know. At the time of these transactions, I was not the agent of the Government in any sense, my engagement having ended nine months previous; but this charge is in itself so inconsistent as to be totally unworthy of belief. The report says that "*the business referred to was the chartering of several transports for the McClellan Expedition.*" The testimony on which the charge is made is, "I should consider myself" under obligations to pay him one-half, that is, $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., "*except on vessels chartered for the McClellan Expedition.*"

Whether I am a wealthy man or a poor man, whether I live at Stonington or at Philadelphia, are matters of little interest to the public, further than this: Messrs. Thomson, Felton and myself, at a time when the Government was helpless, and the railroads destroyed by the enemy, on our own responsibility, caused to be seized or employed 27 vessels, to transport troops and stores to Washington to defend the Capital. To do this required either wealth, or credit, or

some other quality recommending one to the public confidence. Without this timely provision, no well-informed man doubts that the Capital would have fallen into the hands of the Rebels. Of a kin to this clap-trap about undue wealth is the tenderness of conscience expressed in the following passage :

Capt. Loper's connection with the chartering of transports for the Government during this war commenced as early as April 20, 1861, at which time he was appointed Assistant Agent to the War Department by J. Edgar Thomson, President of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. The Committee are unable to say by virtue of what law an "Assistant Agent of the War Department" was appointed, or how the appointing power came to be lodged in the hands of the President of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. They would refer, however, to the appointment or commission itself, which purports to have been given by Mr. Thomson "in accordance with the authority vested in me by the Secretary of War," the Hon. Simon Cameron.

For twenty days only, I acted as assistant agent of the War Department, in securing vessels to carry troops to Washington City, when the Capital was threatened, and the Railroad communication cut off by the enemy. Whether there was any authority derived from the statute-book for J. Edgar Thomson to appoint me, I neither knew nor cared; nor did I pause to inquire whether it was constitutional for J. Edgar Thomson to hold both the agency of the War Department and the Presidency of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. I knew that there was an awful emergency, which gave no honest man time to pettifog such questions; and when I was called on for my aid, feeble though it might be, I did not feel myself at liberty to withhold it. I had been engaged successfully for over 40 years, in building, navigating, and freighting vessels and steamboats, and in

the commission business. It was, therefore, natural enough that Mr. Thomson should think I knew something about the business on hand.

Whatever my ability may have been, I gave it to my country freely, without charging or receiving from the Government one cent for my services, directly or indirectly.

In another part of the report, I find the following charges as applied to myself:

Commencing on the 20th of April, 1861, to act as "Assistant Agent of the War Department," he commenced on the same day to receive 5 per cent. commissions on the earnings of vessels chartered by his agency. The first vessel he took up was the Steamer W. Whilldin, April 20, 1861, owned by Anthony Reybold, at \$175 per day. (Senate, Ex. Doc. 37, page 2, 37th Congress, Second Session.) Mr. Reybold testified that the Whilldin remained in the service under that charter to the present time, although her rate of charter was subsequently reduced to \$150 per day. The receipts of the steamer Whilldin up to the time of the delivery of Mr. Reybold's testimony, must have been somewhere between \$93,650 and \$113,925, on which Capt. Loper's commissions were between \$4,862 and \$5,746. Mr. Reybold chartered the steamer Express for the Government, from Capt. Loper, at \$175 per day, the Star at \$110 per day, and the John Tucker at \$300 per day, paying Loper five per cent. on their gross receipts. Through the same generous agency, Mr. Reybold chartered the Diamond State (375 tons) at \$200 per day, the Swan (350 tons) at \$200 per day, and the Gen. Burnside (400 tons,) at \$300 per day, Capt. Loper himself being part owner of them. Mr. Reybold testifies that his own receipts from these charters were about \$1,100 per day, or at the rate of \$401,500 per year. Mr. Loper's commission on Mr. Reybold's boats could not have been less than \$20,000 per year; for, although he charged no commission on the three boats of which he was part owner, it must be presumed that the amount which he derived from them, over and above a fair mercantile profit, was at least equal to five per cent. otherwise he would have charged the commission. If the Government had bought Mr. Reybold's fleet at the outset, instead of employing Capt. Loper to charter them, it would have saved an immense sum of money.

I had nothing to do with the chartering of the W. Whilldin, in the first instance, either as the agent of the War Department or as the broker of Mr. Reybold; the vessel was seized for the service by order of Gov. Curtin.

My agency for Reybold was confined wholly to the collection of his charter-money after it became due; but the affidavit of Mr. Reybold tells the story best.

The charters of these vessels as well as all others named in my list, whilst acting as agent of the War Department, were signed some two days after the vessels were pressed into service, and the charters dated back, so as to cover all the time they had been employed.

DELAWARE CITY, DEL., February 12th, 1863.

HON. J. W. GRIMES, *Chairman Senate Investigating Committee, Washington, D. C.*

SIR: In justice to Capt. Loper, permit me to make the following statement of facts relative to my connection with him. On the 20th of April, 1861, my steam propeller "W. Whilldin" was pressed into the service of the U. S. War Department, by an order from Gov. Curtin of Pennsylvania; and on the 19th day of July following, John Tucker, Esq., rechartered her and my side-wheel steamer Express. Some months after the date of these charters, I made an agreement with Capt. R. F. Loper for him to collect the charters. And for doing so I was to pay him a commission. It was about ten months after the steamer Express was chartered before the Government paid me one cent of her charter-money; and had it not been for Capt. Loper advancing me money on her charter, it would have caused me considerable trouble and annoyance. On the 23d June, 1862, I chartered the steamer John Tucker to the War Department. I did not see Capt. Loper until a month after I had done so. In fact, he did not know that I owned her, for at least one month after she was chartered, when I applied to Capt. Loper to collect the charter. I have paid Capt. Loper five per cent. for collecting the charter-money, and that is all I have ever paid him or that he has ever charged me. He has advanced me, from time to time, \$10,000 and \$15,000 at a time, on account of charters over-due, for which he has never charged me any commission or interest. I never paid, and he never asked me, any compensation for getting charters for any vessels which I owned. The Diamond State was chartered for the Banks Expedition, at \$250 per day, but could not be got ready in time. Capt. Loper then took charge of her and chartered her to the Government at \$200 per day, for which he charged me no commission. The steamer Star was chartered to the Government for ten days, and if the Government kept her for one year that was not my fault. She must certainly have been worth the money, or the Government would not have retained her. For collecting the charter of the Star, Capt. Loper charged me five per cent. I also distinctly state, that if Capt. Loper should refuse to collect the charters for me, I would at once employ some other merchant to attend to it on the same terms, if

possible. I feel that the commissions paid Capt. Loper are justly earned by him and no more than it is usual to pay, and the customary charge for the same business by the merchants of New York and Philadelphia. Capt. Loper some time since offered to give up the collecting of the charters, but I refused to let him off, as I felt that I could not do as well by placing my business in other hands. I have repeatedly called on Capt. Loper to get the charter of the Express raised in proportion to other boats of her class, but he always told me to let it remain at the price it was, and it has remained at the same price to this time, and her charter to-day is 50 per cent. less than vessels of her class chartered in New York. I have written the above and within without a suggestion from any one, and solely with a view to do justice to Capt. Loper and myself in the transaction. I wish to say it under oath as a part of my testimony, and have accordingly testified.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

ANTHONY REYBOLD.

On this seventeenth day of February, in the year eighteen hundred and sixty-three, before me, N. Callen, a Justice of the Peace, in and for the County of Washington, D. C., personally came Anthony Reybold, and made oath, in due form of law, that all the facts and statements mentioned in the foregoing letter, dated 12th February, 1863, and directed to the Hon. Mr. Grimes, Senator of the United States, are true to the best of his knowledge and belief.

[Signed.]

N. CALLEN, *Justice of Peace.*

The above and within is a true copy of original, forwarded to the Hon. J. W. GRIMES, Chairman Senate Investigating Committee. A. R.

In another part of the report, I find the following:

While Mr. Loper was acting as "Assistant Agent of the War Department" under the appointment of J. Edgar Thomson, he put the following steamers, belonging to the Philadelphia Steam Propeller Company and the Express Steamboat Company, which are practically one and the same concern, into charter to the Government at the following rates, respectively:

1861.	Name.	Tonnage.	Rate Per Day.
April 20.....	Josephine.....	254	\$150
April 22.....	Philadelphia.....	172	135
April 23.....	Thomas Sparks.....	300	175
April 27.....	Oneida (barge).....	133	30
April 27.....	New York.....	158	135
April 27.....	Middlesex (barge).....	124	30
April 27.....	Planet.....	282	150
April 27.....	Ann Eliza.....	211	125
May 7.....	Sophia.....	286	160
Total.....		1,920	\$1.090

In regard to this matter, I have two observations to make :

First: On comparison with the records, it will be found that all vessels owned in whole or in part by me, were chartered to the Government at a rate 25 per cent. lower than was paid for other vessels of equal capacity up to this date.

Second: In every instance when vessels owned in whole or in part by me were chartered to the Government, while I was acting as agent for the Government, the price was approved by Messrs. Thomson and Felton, the authorized agents of the Government. These letters will tell the story :

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY,
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, Philadelphia, February 16, 1863.

DEAR SIR:—During the period I acted temporarily for the War Department, in forwarding troops to Washington, to prevent the National Capital from falling into the hands of the Rebels, I employed Capt. Loper to assist me in procuring vessels to convey troops to Annapolis, the direct route, via Baltimore, having being cut off. The Captain performed this service satisfactorily. From the urgent necessity of affording immediate relief to Washington, we did not stop to chaffer about the prices to be paid for the services of the vessels obtained. After the object was secured, the prices paid were arranged upon a basis that appeared to both myself and Mr. Felton reasonable, considering the short period that they were engaged by my order. I believe I acted as agent for the Department but about three weeks, at the request of the Secretary of War.

Yours, very respectfully,

J. EDGAR THOMSON.

HON. J. W. GRIMES, U. S. Senate.

P. S.—Capt. Loper neither charged or received any salary for his services while employed by me.

J. E. T.

PHILADELPHIA, February 16, 1863.

DEAR SIR:—On or near the 19th of April, 1861, J. Edgar Thomson and myself sent for Captain R. F. Loper, to ascertain from him where boats could be obtained for the transportation of troops designed for Washington. The bridges on the

lower part of the road were then destroyed, and it was necessary to promptly forward troops to save the Capital. Captain Loper faithfully and gratuitously gave his time for two or three weeks, in hunting up and chartering vessels, and when asked by Mr. Thomson and myself to make out a bill for his services, he declined to make any or receive anything, stating that he was most happy to have done all he had done without compensation. I cheerfully bear this testimony to Captain Loper's efficiency, and to the value of his services at the most trying period of our Country's history. I cheerfully concur in what Mr. Thomson has said on the other page.

Yours, truly,

S. M. FELTON.

The above is a copy of my letter to Captain Loper.

S. M. FELTON.

Captain Loper is at liberty to take a copy of this letter.

S. M. FELTON.

Hon. J. W. GRIMES.

Further along in the report, I find this:

"There are discrepancies between the two lists which the Committee will not attempt to explain. The steamers Josephine, Thomas Sparks, Planet, Ann Eliza, and Sophia, which appear in the report of the Secretary of War as having been chartered by Captain Loper during the period of his agency, namely, between April 20 and May 8, 1861, do not appear in Captain Loper's list at all. These steamers were owned in part by Captain Loper, as stockholder in the two companies."

The Committee cannot fail to be ashamed of this statement, when they turn to the 255th page of their own report, where they give in full, a list, headed "R. F. Loper's List of Vessels Chartered," etc., in which the names of all these five vessels are clearly given. Again, on pages Nos. 277 and 278, they will find the names of all these vessels, with the price of each, per day, set opposite to their names. Other discrepancies, which occupy so large a place in the imaginations of the Committee, will vanish in like manner on looking into the evidence.

Here follows an admixture of charges against myself and others:

"Captain Loper's assistant agency lasted only till May 8, 1861, at which time his commission was revoked by Mr. J. Edgar Thomson, who informed Capt. Loper

that he had been notified by the Secretary of War, (Mr. Cameron,) of the appointment of Mr. John Tucker, as "United States Transport Agent." Mr. Thomson then wrote a letter to the Secretary of War, stating that Capt. Loper had been "untiring in his efforts to serve the country." The more heavy operations of Capt. Loper began with the appointment of Mr. Tucker, as "United States Transport Agent," and they have continued without intermission during the whole of Mr. Tucker's two terms of office, first as agent, and subsequently as assistant Secretary of War. Mr. Tucker employed Capt. Loper to "inspect and recommend" all kinds of vessels at Philadelphia, New York, and Annapolis, for various services and expeditions, and Capt. Loper proceeded to charge from five to ten per cent. commissions on the gross earnings of the vessels recommended to Mr. Tucker for charter. In some cases, it was denominated a brokerage commission, in others a commission for collecting; and in others still, he received five per cent. for brokerage, and five per cent. additional for collecting the sums due the owners. The testimony of Wilmon Whilldin shows that Loper took \$8.000 from him on the earnings of the steamers Pilot Boy and George Washington, being ten per cent. on the proceeds of their charter parties. Capt. Loper admits that he took \$5.000 from Mr. Anthony Groves on certain vessels, and Mr. Groves testified that in making the charter, he estimated for the commissions he should be obliged to pay Loper, so that the money really came out of the Government."

So far as these charges apply to Mr. Tucker, he can answer for himself, and so far as they refer to me, I propose to submit the affidavits of Capt. Whilldin, and Anthony Groves, Jr., without note or commentary :

PHILADELPHIA, February 14, 1863.

HONORED SIR:—Having read that part of the report of your Committee relative to my boats "Pilot Boy" and "George Washington," which would convey the idea that there was unfair dealing on the part of Capt. Loper to me or to the Government in his transactions with me, I would state that I went before you with a desire to tell all I knew in the matter. I stated to you that I had not given anything to any one to have my boats chartered, but was applied to for them. I would further add, in justice to Capt. Loper, as well as myself, that I did not agree to give him a per centage to collect my charters, until two months or more after the boats had been taken. The money was to be paid monthly, but it was six months before a dollar was paid me by the Government. If their collection did not involve a routine of business of which I was totally unacquainted, and a great expenditure of time which I could not spare from the attention necessary to the running of the boats, and my other business, or was as easily done as the collection of any common business debt, I should not have found it necessary to employ any one; but, as it was, I could not do both, and knowing better how to run steamboats than to collect

debts from Government, I chose to employ the Captain, who, I believed, knew all about these matters. Under all the circumstances, my employing him or some other person has been almost as necessary as to employ any one connected with running the boats. I have never begrudged him a dollar for doing my business, and would never have employed him if I had for a moment thought that he or I was guilty of any wrong. If he should give up my business, I would at once be necessitated to employ some one else to attend to it. Please excuse the liberty I have taken.

I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,

WILMON WHILLDIN.

Hon. J. W. GRIMES, Chairman of the Investigating Committee.

As Capt. R. F. Loper desired to have a copy of my letter to the Hon. J. W. Grimes, I certify this to be a true copy.

WILMON WHILLDIN.

I have written the above without a suggestion from any one, and solely with a view to do justice to myself and Captain Loper in this transaction. I wish to say it under oath, as part of my testimony, and have accordingly testified before an Alderman.

[Signed.]

WILMON WHILLDIN.

Wilmon Whilldin, being duly sworn, according to law, saith, that the facts set forth in the foregoing letter and statement are true and correct in every particular.

[Signed.]

WILMON WHILLDIN.

Sworn and subscribed before me, an Alderman of the City of Philadelphia, this 16th day of February, A. D., 1863.

[Signed.]

JOHN WHITE, *Alderman.*

PHILADELPHIA, February 13th, 1863.

HON. J. W. GRIMES, *Chairman Senate Investigating Committee, Washington, D. C.*

SIR: In looking at my evidence before the Select Committee of the Senate on Transports, "as published" I can only, in justice to Capt. Loper, explain that part of it which refers to the five per cent. commission paid him. If I did not state, it was my intention distinctly to say that, had it been told me that I would be obliged to pay a commission for procuring a charter for our Company's boats, I would have charged the difference for them; but I did not charge more, for the reason that they had been chartered prior to any commission being asked or allowed; therefore, the Company paid the commission, and not the Government.

Capt. Loper did not charter any of our Company's boats while he was acting as agent of the Government, as all of our boats were pressed into the service by Gov. Curtin of Pennsylvania, and the charters made some time after, for one month.

All the commissions paid R. F. Loper were for collecting the money due on charters from the War Department, and not for his influence in procuring charters.

Had it not been for the influence he used in favor of the Government, our Company would have received thousands of dollars more for our steamers in the "McClellan" Expedition.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. GROVES, Jr.

I certify that the above is a true copy sent to Mr. Grimes.

A. GROVES, Jr.

With a view to do justice to myself and Captain R. F. Loper, I beg leave to say that I have written the within letter without any promptings from any individual, without any expectation of reward, or having received any to substantiate the above. I have sworn to the same.

[Signed.]

A. GROVES, Jr.

A Groves, Jr., being duly sworn, according to law, saith, that the facts set forth in the above statement and foregoing letter are true and correct in every particular.

[Signed.]

A. GROVES, Jr.

Sworn and subscribed before me, this 16th day of February, A. D., 1863.

[Signed.]

JOHN WHITE,

Alderman, City of Philadelphia.

The report proceeds :

"(Commencing on the 26th of April, 1861, to act as assistant agent of the War Department, he commenced on the same day to receive five per cent. commissions on the earnings of the vessels chartered by his agency. The first vessel he took up was the steamer W. Whilldin, April 20, 1861, owned by Anthony Reybold, at \$175 per day, (Senate Ex. Doc. 37, page 2, 37th Congress, Second Session). Mr. Reybold testifies that the Whilldin remained in the service under that charter to the present time, although her rate of charter was subsequently reduced to \$150 per day. The receipts of the steamer Whilldin up to the time of the delivery of Mr. Reybold's testimony, must have been somewhere between \$87,650 and \$113,925, on which Capt. Loper's commissions were between \$4,882 and \$5,746. Mr. Reybold chartered the steamer Express to the Government, through Capt. Loper, at \$175 per day, the Star at \$110 per day, and the John Tucker at \$300 per day, paying Loper five per cent. on their gross receipts. Through the same generous agency, Mr. Reybold chartered the Diamond State, 375 tons, at \$200 per day; the Swan, 350 tons, at \$200 per day, and the Gen. Burnside, 400 tons, at \$300 per day, Capt. Loper himself being part owner of them)."

The charge here made, like all others in which the Committee attempt to be specific or give names, is unsustained by any proof. I had nothing to do with the charter of the W. Whilldin; this is shown by the affidavit of Mr. Reybold above set forth. Near the close of the report, I find the following, implicating me in some fraudulent transactions in the charter of the steamer Metamora :

"Another extraordinary condition of facts is developed in connection with this steamer. She was an old vessel, and cost her owners \$25,000. She was chartered upon the recommendation of Capt. R. F. Loper, by Assistant Secretary of War John Tucker, though the latter gentleman has failed, for some unexplained reason, to include her name in the list he furnished to the Committee of vessels chartered by him or under his direction. The price paid for her by the Government was \$450 per day, according to the testimony of Mr. Lewis Baker, one of her owners. She was chartered to be delivered at Annapolis on the 6th of March, 1862. I state from memory. A telegram came on here from one of the owners in New York to deliver her there on the 6th of March, with 4,000 gallons of water on board. We got ready to run the blockade, and were stopped here on the night of the 4th, by the Quartermaster's Department, at 4 or 5 o'clock in the afternoon. That is the time she was chartered. * * * * *

This story is without any shadow of evidence to sustain it. I had no more to do with the charter of the *Metamora* than the Chairman of the Committee, or any other gentleman. I neither chartered her for the Government nor collected her charter money. But let Mr. Danforth's letter tell the story :

BREVOORT HOUSE, NEW YORK, February 20, 1863.

MY DEAR SIR:—I have your note of the 13th instant, inquiring of me if I ever applied to you to charter or to use your influence with any officer of the Government to charter the *Metamora*.

In reply to this, I have to say that I never applied to you to charter the steamer *Metamora* or any other vessel. This fully answers both branches of your question in the negative.

Very truly yours,

J. B. DANFORTH.

To Capt. R. F. LOPER, Washington City.

If in any case the Government has been seriously damaged through my agency in chartering vessels, it is the fault of those in power and not mine, because in no case was any vessel or steamer chartered by me for a longer term than one month, and if the Government chose to keep them longer, it only proves that the Government agents were satisfied with the terms on which I chartered them.

Mr. Tucker, in his testimony before the Committee, was

under a mistake, which he corrected in his subsequent testimony (see Committee Report, p. 358, lines 8—16,) when he said that I examined and reported steamers for the McClellan Expedition in Baltimore. I never examined any steamers or vessels in Baltimore, nor recommended them to the War Department, since the war broke out.

The Committee, in their anxiety to fix the crime of swindling or perjury on me, lay great stress on some discrepancy between my testimony and the list furnished by the War Department, as to whether certain vessels were chartered by Mr. Tucker or by me. I stated in my testimony that I chartered them. The War Department says Mr. Tucker chartered them. The simple truth is that I inspected the vessels and made the contracts with the owners. Mr. Tucker signed the charters after the terms were agreed upon, so that, while I know that in point of fact the business was transacted by me, the records of the War Department show that it was done by Mr. Tucker. I signed one charter for some of the vessels. Mr. Tucker signed the remainder. There are five charter parties to each vessel. The reason I signed one was as follows: The schooners were going away and did not know their destination, and wanted one charter to take with them to show that they were in the employ of the Government. I signed this charter party "R. F. Loper, by request of Gen. Burnside, and by order of John Tucker." Mr. Tucker signed the four remaining charters for each vessel.

The same explanation may be given of the cases of the

steamers Louisiana and Pocahontas. I testify that Gen. Burnside chartered the vessels, and the War Department says Mr. Tucker chartered them. In point of fact, Gen. Burnside chartered the vessels, at Baltimore, and at Annapolis, and the charters were signed by Mr. Tucker, at Philadelphia, and the same explanation may apply in other cases.

Mr. Grimes, as General Burnside's letter of March 10th, 1863, will show, need not have put the Government to so great an expense for witnesses, traveling, hotel bills and carriage hire of the Hon. Committee in Philadelphia, New York and elsewhere; in order to ascertain about my commissions they only had to go to the Library in the Capitol, and examine the report of Mr. Washburne to the House of Representatives, from the Select Committee to Inquire into Army Contracts, (marked No. 2,) in my evidence before that Committee, (page 609,) under date of February 7th, 1862, in which I distinctly state about my commissions as follows:

Question—What compensation did you receive for the services you rendered the Government?

Answer—I have paid all my own expenses, and I never charged the Government one dime for my time or traveling expenses. The only compensation resulting to me was a commission for collecting and advancing moneys to parties whom the Government owed.

Question—What is the ordinary commission for collecting and advancing money?

Answer—Two and a half per cent. for advancing, and two and a half for collecting.

Question—What amount, by way of commissions or brokerage, did you ordinarily charge in these transactions?

Answer—Five per cent.

Question—Would that include interest?

Answer—There would be no charge for interest; the five per cent. includes interest. I suppose, in the end, I may get, saying nothing about the interest, two per cent. for all my trouble—that is, if I should get the money from the Government in the course of two or three months; but I run the risk of not getting the money from the Government.

On page 14, Mr. Grimes says :

“He (Captain Loper) assured the Committee on several occasions that he had money enough before the war broke out, for himself and children. (He had been an agent in furnishing Government transportation during the Mexican war,)” etc.

In reply to the ungenerous fling contained in the above insinuation, I submit the following letters, all bearing directly on the subject :

[CONFIDENTIAL.]

QUARTERMASTER GENERAL'S OFFICE,

WASHINGTON, Nov. 29th, 1846.

SIR :—The Quartermaster's Department is desirous of availing itself of your well known intelligence, judgment and practical experience, in the discharge of its duties, connected with the construction, purchase or charter of vessels, boats, and other objects required in the prosecution of military marine operations, and therefore name and by these presents, appoint you one of its special agents, at a salary or per diem allowance of per day, besides travelling and other expenses incident to the service on which you may be employed; during the continuance of your special agency, you will please signify as early as may be, your acceptance or non-acceptance of the agency proposed, and in case the former, you will please regard the following as instructions upon the subject therein specially referred to.

The Department has been recently required to provide at an embarrassingly short notice, one hundred and fifty boats or barges of the description indicated in the drawings and specifications handed you yesterday, by the first of January, and it is to provision and proper equipment of this required *Boat fleet*, your individual attention is now invoked, and it is on your efforts that the Department mainly relies for the timely execution of one of the most important as well as difficult orders which the exigencies of the war have thrown upon it, you will please take early and the most energetic and prompt measures which your experience may suggest for the procurement by contracts, with responsible individuals, of the number of boats or barges in question, in your city, Baltimore, New York, Boston, and elsewhere, impressing strongly upon the attention of all persons disposed to contract, the importance to contractors as well as all others concerned, of having the work done within the time specified by contract, and of good materials and workmanship, and in strict conformity to

the drawings and specifications referred to, a copy of each of which you will hand to each of the contractors for their guide and government in the work, special care should be taken in the construction of the boats designed for the landing of heavy ordnance.

Any assistance, with the power of the officers of this Department, at the places where you may be operating, as well of the officers of the Navy Yards will be promptly accorded to you. The entire confidence in your judgment and discretion renders more detailed instructions unnecessary; as to price, it is not deemed expedient to limit you further than to intimate the hope that you may be able to resist any combination which may be formed to take advantage of the urgent necessities of the Government on the part of bidders, and be able to accomplish our object at what may be fairly considered, under the circumstances, a fair price.

The estimate made by officers of the navy as well as naval constructors, is about \$400 per boat. I shall be agreeably disappointed if you are not compelled by untoward circumstances to pay considerably more.

But I am entirely confident you will in this important respect do the best that can be done. Should you find after due efforts (what I fear you will find) it impracticable to secure contracts for the whole number of boats required, of the description indicated in the drawings and specifications already referred to, you will secure the greatest number possible, and build or cause to be built the number of flat bottomed boats of the description, and from which you may think best adapted to the service for which they are required necessary to make up the deficiency. Keep this office advised of your measures in the prosecution of the work confided to you, and rely at all times upon all the aid and assistance on the part of the Department.

I remain, sir, with great respect and esteem,

[Signed.]

Your Ob't Sr't,

HENRY STANTON,

Ass't Qr. Mr. Gen'l.

CAPT. R. F. LOPER,

Philadelphia.

QUARTERMASTER GENERAL'S OFFICE,

WASHINGTON CITY, August 10th, 1848.

CAPTAIN:—I have received your letter of the 9th instant. As you held an appointment, and not an office, the same course was pursued in your case that is pursued in all similar cases, you were considered out of service from the time you intimated a wish to be no longer considered in the service. Entertaining as I did very high regard for you, and being entirely satisfied with the valuable services you had rendered, I would have given you a written testimonial had I considered it of

any importance, but it affords me sincere pleasure now to assure you that I shall always hold in grateful remembrance the energy and ability with which you performed every duty confided to you during the whole period you were employed by the Department.

I am, Captain, most respectfully, your obedient servant,

[Signed.]

THOS. JESSUP,

Quartermaster-General.

CAPT. R. F. LOPER,

Philadelphia.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

Third Auditor's Office, August 14th, 1848.

SIR :—Your letter of the 19th instant has been received, enclosing G. H. Crossman's receipt in your favor for \$88 73-100, which sum has been passed to your credit, closing your account as late Agent Quartermaster's Department, upon the books of this office.

Respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

[Signed.]

J. THOMPSON,

Acting Auditor.

To R. F. LOPER, Esq.,

Late Agent Quartermaster's Department, Philadelphia.

The very great service I rendered to my Government in this great emergency I will explain as follows :—On or about the 25th of August, 1846, Gen'l Scott was at or near Brazos, Texas, with his army. He made a requisition on the War Department for one hundred and fifty surf-boats, to be fifty (50) feet long, twelve (12) feet wide, and four (4) feet deep, and he stated in a letter to Mr. Marcy, (then Secretary of War,) that the above named boats must be shipped on or before the first day of January following, or he would be compelled to put off his Expedition against Vera Cruz, until the next year, as the season of the northers would have commenced soon after January. The fulfilment of this

urgent order would save the entire expense of the Mexican War for one year. In this emergency, the War Department applied to the Navy Department for assistance. The Secretary of the Navy called the naval constructors to Washington, to consult with them, and on the 28th day of November, 1846, the board of naval constructors decided that it would take at least 90 days to complete these one hundred and fifty boats, and have them ready for shipment, provided all the Navy Yards in the country were used for that purpose solely. Mr. Marcy, (Secretary of War) telegraphed me to report to Washington, and on my arrival this vital business and the decision of the naval constructors were made known to me by Colonel Henry Stanton, then acting Quartermaster General. I asked him if Mr. Lenthall, the naval constructor, was in Washington; he replied that he was, and sent for him. I had then and have now, every confidence in any calculation made by this gentleman concerning ship or boat building. I asked him if he had made the calculation himself, and was sure that the boats could be built and ready for shipment in ninety days, he said he had, and was certain that they could be finished in that time. I then turned to the Hon. Mr. Marcy, and informed him that I would guarantee that the boats should be furnished and shipped in thirty days, and *I made my words good.* The boats were built and shipped inside of the thirty days, and *one year's expense of the Mexican War was saved to the United States*, and all of our brave army landed on the enemy's coast without the loss of a man. The way I accom-

plished this important work, was as follows :—The men at the Navy Yards work eight (8) hours a day. I had two gangs of men and they worked eight hours on and off, whilst the naval constructors based their calculations on eight hours a day. I based mine upon three times that much ; so, if they could complete the boats in ninety days, I could do the work in thirty days. Had I accomplished this feat in England, or any other foreign country, in place of being called a swindler, I would have been highly honored. The consciousness, however, that I had tried to serve my country was sufficient for me.

The letter from Col. Henry Stanton, acting Quartermaster General, which is published in this report, shows the importance of the business, and the letter from General Jessup, Quartermaster General, shows the manner in which I executed the business. I now hand you all the original letters named in this report, as also the affidavits of Mr. Anthony Groves, Jr., of Mr. Anthony Reybold, and Capt. Wilmon Whilldin, which I wish to have placed in the Quartermaster General's Office, as an offset to the slanders which have been heaped upon me, and most respectfully request of you certified copies of the same.

I also beg to refer you to the letter of J. Thompson, Third Auditor of the Treasury Department, dated August, 1848, which will show you that my accounts were all satisfactorily adjusted four days after the termination of my office.

On page 17, of the Grimes Report, we read :

"The heavier operations of Captain Loper began with the appointment of Mr. Tucker as 'United States Transport Agent,' and they have continued, without intermission, during the whole of Mr. Tucker's two terms of office, first as agent, and subsequently as Assistant Secretary of War."

To the best of my knowledge and belief, I never chartered to Mr. Tucker a steamboat, vessel or barge, during his entire term of office as Assistant Secretary of War, except on the McClellan Expedition.

On page 27, the report continues :

"*Fourth.* That the monopoly of chartering vessels by Hall, Loper, and others, even were it known that their transactions were honest, cannot be justified; and the officers who knew that Hall, Loper, and others were extorting commissions from the owners and agents of vessels, and permitted such monopoly to continue, deserve the severest censure."

This charge of monopoly is absurd. There have been chartered to the United States Government, at the Port of Philadelphia, over two hundred steamboats, vessels and barges, in addition to those intended for the McClellan Expedition, and for which merchants have been paid a commission. From the date of the Mexican war, I have been well acquainted with Col. Crosman, who has been stationed at Philadelphia, from the early part of the rebellion. The chartering of all steamers properly belongs to his department; yet, with all the "monopoly" charged against me, I have chartered to his department but a single steamer—no vessels or barges—since I ceased to be agent of the Department. This steamer, the Cecil, a tug boat, (the exception to which I allude), belonging to New York, was chartered for an ice breaker on the Potomac. I did not charge, nor receive any commissions on her charter, nor had I any interest in her.

So far as the monopoly in New York is concerned, I have not chartered ten steamers, or vessels, for the use of the Government since the war commenced. My "dramatic performance" and the character of my monopoly at Annapolis is shown in the letters of Gen. Burnside, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Flanagan.

On page 17 of the Report we read :

"A dramatic performance of much merit was enacted on this occasion. Capt. Loper testifies (page 257) that he sent a soldier around to warn all captains, that if they had anything to do with brokers or middle men, he would not touch their vessels."

For my part of the performance I refer to the letters of General Burnside, Messrs. A. C. Hall, and S. Flanagan, on pages 25 and 26.

All the steamers chartered at Annapolis, for the use of the Burnside Expedition, are named in Gen. Burnside's letter, dated March 10th, 1863, in Mr. Hall's, under date of March 9th, 1863, and in Mr. Flanagan's of the 6th instant, which are herewith submitted :

"WASHINGTON, March 10th, 1863.

"CAPT. R. F. LOPER,

"MY DEAR CAPTAIN:—I have received your letter of the 9th, and in reply I am happy to state that while I was embarking my troops at Annapolis, in January, 1862, I found that I needed more vessels than had been chartered for my use, as more troops had been added to my command, and consequently more vessels were needed for horses and men.

"The steamer 'Pocohontas' was then lying at Annapolis, having come down with water for the use of the expedition, and Mr. Brandt, her owner, being at the time in Annapolis, I made an agreement with him for the Pocahontas to take some of the horses on board. Upon further inquiry for vessels for troops, I learned from Mr. Brandt that the 'Louisiana,' a vessel capable of carrying over a regiment, was at Baltimore, I immediately sent Mr. Brandt to Baltimore on a steam tug, to ascertain what arrangements could be made in regard to chartering her. On his arrival, he telegraphed me that she could not be had for less than \$800 per day.

As it was positively necessary for me to have more vessels at once, I told him to engage her at that price, which he did, and on the next day she arrived at Annapolis with water on board ready to sail.

"The arrangements for chartering both the Pocahontas and Louisiana were made between Mr. Brandt and myself, and the charters signed by Mr. Tucker at my request. You were in Annapolis at the time, and I consulted fully with you in regard to the chartering of both vessels, but all the arrangements were made by myself. The Louisiana took troops on board, and proceeded to Hatteras Inlet, Roanoke and Newbern, and was discharged from my department at the latter place some time in April, I think, and sent North, to report to the Quartermaster's Department, since which time I have known nothing of her, save that I hear she was engaged in service for General McClellan.

"In reply to the question in regard to your notification to the masters of vessels, I distinctly remember that you did notify the masters of schooners and vessels for carrying forage, baggage, &c., not to pay commissions to agents in Annapolis for chartering their vessels.

"Very truly, yours,

"A. E. BURNSIDE,

"Major General."

"BALTIMORE, March 9, 1863.

"CAPT. R. F. LOPER, Willard's Hotel, Washington.

"DEAR SIR:—Your letter of the 7th inst., in relation to chartering vessels, at Annapolis, in January, 1862, for the Burnside Expedition, was duly received. In reply, I would say that you did not charter any vessels or steamers of me, or through me as agent, of the Burnside Expedition. I chartered my two steam tug-boats, James Murray and E. H. Herbert, for that expedition. They were taken by Gen. Burnside, and inspected by his chief engineer, C. H. Haswell, Esq. The charter parties for the two boats were signed by me, as owner of them, and by Hon. John Tucker, General Transport Agent of the U. S. War Department.

Yours, respectfully,

A. C. HALL."

"PHILADELPHIA, March 6th, 1863.

"CAPT. R. F. LOPER.

"DEAR SIR:—Yours of the 6th before me, and, in reply to your several inquiries, beg leave to say in answer to your

First Question—What was the name of the Government Officer who chartered the steamers J. P. Levy, Alert, Alida, and Champion, and who signed the charter parties?

Answer—Mr. John Tucker.

Second—At what place or port were the above named steamers at the time of charter?

Answer—Two at Baltimore and two at Philadelphia.

Third—Did I or did I not charge you a commission for chartering or procuring a charter for the above or any of your boats that were chartered for the Burnside Expedition?

Answer—You did not; but I paid you a commission of five per cent. for collecting money from Government, as earned by the charter parties.

Fourth—What was the name of the Government officer that chartered of you the tug Adriatic?

Answer—Lieut. Crosby.

Fifth—Did I charge you a commission for procuring a charter for the Adriatic?

Answer—You did not.

Sixth—Did you ever pay or promise to pay me a commission for chartering any of your steamboats, barges or vessels, whilst I was acting as Agent of the United States War Department, between the 20th day of April and the 10th day of May, 1861?

Answer—I did not.

Yours, very truly,

S. FLANAGAN.

Of the schooners or vessels chartered by me, when assisting General Burnside, at Annapolis, not a master or owner can say I ever charged the value of a dollar commissions for chartering. I think that I was with General Burnside nearly forty days and nights. I furnished all my stationery, including five charter parties for each steamer or vessel; paid my own clerk hire and board, and never have asked nor received, nor would I receive, one cent from Government for any of these expenses.

Mr. Grimes says I have chartered my steamers at high prices. This is not shown by any evidence; nor is it the fact. With three exceptions, all the vessels in which I have any direct interest have been chartered to Government by their other owners, without my assistance by word or

letter. The three steamers mentioned above are the General Meigs and General Burnside, chartered to General M. C. Meigs, Quartermaster General, and the Diamond State to Major Stewart Van Vliet. I have not used my position to charter my vessels at high prices.

Page 14 of the Report says :

“ Captain Loper says (page 252) that he has ‘neglected everything since the war broke out but to attend to and try to assist the Government and serve his country as much as in him lay.’ ”

That this was no idle boast, the following letters prove, (J. Edgar Thomson’s, S. M. Felton’s, Governor Olden’s, General Burnside’s and Colonel Ingall’s :)

PHILADELPHIA, WILMINGTON AND BALTIMORE RAILROAD COMPANY,

PHILADELPHIA, May 11th, 1861.

HON. SIMON CAMERON, Secretary of War :

We take great pleasure in saying that Captain R. F. Loper, of this city, has been untiring in his efforts to save the country, in the trying emergency when Washington was in danger. About and immediately after April 20th, we sent for him to aid us in the procuring of boats and transports, between Perryville and Annapolis, he cheerfully devoted himself entirely to the service of the Government, and rendered us a most valuable service in procuring, coaling, and provisioning such boats as were required ; from his familiarity with this business, and his untiring energy, the Government have derived most efficient aid in its hour of need.

Yours truly,

[Signed.]

S. M. FELTON.

J. EDGAR THOMSON.

Special Agents of the U. S. War Department.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

TRENTON, May 7th, 1861.

CAPTAIN R. F. LOPER :

DEAR SIR :—Permit me to tender you my thanks for the great service you have rendered New Jersey in the transportation of the troops lately despatched, I must

attribute, to a very great extent, the success of the expedition to your services in the providing, equipping, and commanding the fleet, you will also please convey to your son my thanks for the very valuable assistance rendered by him.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

[Signed.]

CHS. S. OLDEN.

ANNAPOLIS, January 7th, 1862.

HON. SIMON CAMERON, Secretary of War, Washington:

DEAR SIR:—I beg leave to express to you my hearty appreciation of the services rendered me, in the fitting out of the expedition under my command by Captain R. F. Loper, the interest and zeal manifested by this gentleman in this work, has been constant and untiring, and he has in every instance fully answered every demand made upon his skill and his patience.

I most cheerfully acknowledge my obligations to him, and take great pleasure in recommending him as a competent and efficient man, whose experience and mature judgment cannot fail to be of great service in any case of emergency.

Yours, very truly,

[Signed.]

A. E. BURNSIDE.

Brigadier General.

ALEXANDRIA, April 2d, 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I have now transferred my vessels, etc., to Colonel Rucker, and Lieutenant Ferguson, and shall leave this evening. Both these officers greatly desire your assistance, until General McDowell's command has embarked. I trust you will add to existing obligations a few days more of your valuable counsel and personal supervision. In making this request I claim it is a cheerful duty to express to you how profoundly sensible I am of your generous aid to me.

I hardly know what I could have done without you, while with your assistance we have so far achieved an unparalleled success in the embarkation of troops, I hope Colonel Rucker will have as good fortune. I hope to see you *again* and *again*, for long years to come, and fervently trust your days will be long here, where your abilities, kind heartedness, and charities, are so well appreciated. Let us both have faith to believe and expect that peace and prosperity will soon be restored to our afflicted country; visit us when you can and let me hear from you at your leisure.

In haste, yours truly,

[Signed.]

RUFUS INGALLS,

Lt. Col. A. D. C.

CAPT. R. F. LOPER, Willard's.

In conclusion, I wish to imitate the Committee so far as to recommend a few reforms in the modes of investigation practiced in Congress.

First: On every such Committee I would have one respectable lawyer, who should be restrained by professional pride from plying witnesses with leading questions, and embodying the answer in the question, so that a witness who knows neither the rules of evidence, nor the force of words, may decide the gravest questions by an unmeaning "yes" or "no."

Second: I would give the party whose good name is assailed the privilege, extended everywhere to thieves and murderers, of confronting his accuser, and, by himself or his attorney, cross-examining the witnesses, and, after the accusation was exhausted, allow him to bring witnesses for his defence before the Committee.

Third: I would require notice to be given to the parties accused of the time and place of taking depositions, so that they might attend and hear what was proved, and frame their defence accordingly.

Fourth: I would require the report of such Committee to be printed, by authority, before they furnished copies to the newspapers for publication.

Fifth: Where fraud was discovered, I would have the party indicted and tried at once, so that, if he is guilty, he may be punished, or, if he is innocent, he may have an opportunity to set himself right before the world.

The system now pursued has evil tendencies without limit :

First: It destroys the private character of citizens and leaves them without remedy.

Second: It destroys the confidence of the public in the integrity of the Administration.

Third: When the truth comes to be known, it destroys the confidence of the constituent in the honor and veracity of the representative.

Fourth: It drives from the public service men of honesty and self-respect, who have not the courage to endure scandal.

For myself, I am not so delicate as some people. I have stood by the Administration in its darkest hour, and I intend to stand by it to the end. The rise and fall of politicians is nothing to me, compared to the preservation of the Constitution and the Union.

Concerning Mr. Charles Coblins and Mr. Pickrell, I never knew either of them by sight, nor spoke to them.

I cannot close without volunteering a word in favor of Messrs. J. Edgar Thomson and S. M. Felton. When the Capital was in danger, these patriotic gentlemen gave all their energies to the Government, for ten days and nights, not even taking half the time necessary for sleep, and I am positive that had it not been for their exertions the Capital would have fallen into the hands of the secessionists. We tried to serve our country, and we succeeded.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. F. LOPER.

Philadelphia, March, 1863.

LIST

OF ALL THE VESSELS CHARTERED BY R. F. LOPER,

Whilst he was acting as agent of the United States War Department, under appointment received from J. Edgar Thomson, Esq., of the Port of Philadelphia, the full amount for which I bound the Government for, is set opposite the names of each vessel.

STEAMER:								
W. Whilldin.....	From April 20,	to May 20	30 days.	At \$175 per day	\$	5,250	00	
Richard Willing....	" 20,	" 20	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
John S. Shriver.....	" 20,	" 20	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
H. L. Gaw.....	" 20,	" 20	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
Josephine.....	" 20,	" 20	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
Philadelphia.....	" 22,	" 22	30 "	135	"	4,050	00	
Commerce.....	" 23,	" 23	30 "	100	"	3,000	00	
Thomas Sparks.....	" 23,	" 23	30 "	175	"	5,250	00	
C. C. Alger.....	" 26,	" 26	30 "	100	"	3,000	00	
J. R. Thomson.....	" 26,	" 26	30 "	100	"	3,000	00	
Artisan.....	" 26,	" 26	30 "	100	"	3,000	00	
New York.....	" 27,	" 27	30 "	135	"	4,050	00	
Planet.....	" 27,	" 27	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
Ann Eliza.....	" 27,	" 27	30 "	125	"	3,750	00	
Fanny Cadwallader.	May 5,	June 4	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
W. Woodward.....	" 5,	" 4	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
Elizabeth.....	" 6,	" 5	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
Octorora.....	" 6,	" 5	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
F. W. Brune.....	" 6,	" 5	30 "	150	"	4,500	00	
Sophia.....	" 7,	" 6	30 "	160	"	4,800	00	
Reindeer.....	" 7,	" 6	30 "	66	"	1,980	00	
Wissahickon.....	" 7,	" 6	30 "	66	"	1,980	00	
Barge—Oneida.....	April 27,	May 27	30 "	30	"	900	00	
" Middlesex....	" 27,	" 27	30 "	30	"	900	00	
							\$89,910	00

I do assure you that I never received of any of the owners, agents, or brokers, of the above named steamers and barges the value of one dollar, as a commission or present for chartering any one or all of the above named vessels.

R. F. LOPER.

CONTINUATION OF R. F. LOPER'S DEFENCE.

Containing Important Matter not included in the foregoing pages.

Mr. GRIMES, on page 27 of his Report to the Senate, says :

“Many of the Charters effected by, through, or under the agency of Hall, Loper and others, were secured at exorbitant prices, and are otherwise tainted with fraud.”

In reply to the foregoing, I submit the following statement, in addition to those already published :

Chartered by R. F. LOPER, as Agent for the Government.

STEAMERS.	Tonnage.	Chartered for 30 days.	Days.	Per day.	Price \$ month.
W. Whilldin, . . .	310	April 20 to May 20	30	\$175	\$5,250 00
Richard Willing, . .	232	“ “ “ “	“	150	4,500 00
J. S. Schriver, . . .	222	“ “ “ “	“	150	4,500 00
H. L. Gaw, . . .	228	“ “ “ “	“	150	4,500 00
Josephine, . . .	254	“ “ “ “	“	150	4,500 00
Philadelphia, . . .	172	“ 22 “ 22	“	135	4,050 00
Commerce, . . .	160	“ 23 “ 23	“	100	3,000 00
Thos. Sparks, . . .	300	“ “ “ “	“	175	5,250 00
C. C. Alger, . . .	149	“ 26 “ 26	“	100	3,000 00
J. R. Thompson, . .	170	“ “ “ “	“	100	3,000 00
Artisan, . . .	173	“ “ “ “	“	100	3,000 00
New York, . . .	158	“ 27 “ 27	“	135	4,050 00
Planet, . . .	282	“ “ “ “	“	150	4,500 00
Ann Eliza, . . .	211	“ “ “ “	“	125	3,750 00
F. Cadwalader, . . .	218	May 5 to June 4	“	150	4,500 00
W. Woodward, . . .	275	“ “ “ “	“	150	4,500 00
Elizabeth, . . .	245	“ 6 “ 5	“	150	4,500 00
Octorara, . . .	237	“ “ “ “	“	150	4,500 00
F. W. Brune, . . .	237	“ “ “ “	“	150	4,500 00
Sophia, . . .	286	“ 7 “ 6	“	160	4,800 00
Reindeer, . . .	40	“ “ “ “	“	66	1,980 00
Wissahickon, . . .	40	“ “ “ “	“	66	1,980 00
Barge Oneida, . . .	133	April 27 to May 27	“	30	900 00
“ Middlesex, . . .	158	“ “ “ “	“	30	900 00
	4890			\$2,997	\$89,910 00

For names and prices of the above, refer to Letter to Secretary of War, dated March 27th, 1862—37th Congress, 2d Session, Senate : Ex. Doc. No. 37.

NOTE.—The average of the above charters is less than 62 cents per ton per day.

The foregoing statement shows that the twenty-two steamers and two barges chartered by me, whilst acting as agent for the Government, under J. Edgar Thomson, summed up 4,890 tons, and cost the sum of \$2,997 per day, or \$89,910 per month.

Now, at the same time, Col. D. D. Tompkins, U. S. Quartermaster, at New York, chartered two steamships, (the "Kedar," 1800 tons, and the "Baltic," 2723 tons,) in all 4523 tons, at \$2000 per day each, showing a comparison as follows :

My charters amounted, as above, 4890 tons, at \$2997 per day.

D. D. Tompkins' "	"	4523	"	4000	"
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		367		\$1003	

Making a difference in favor of my charters in this case of \$30,090 *per month, besides furnishing the Government with 367 tons more.*

In relation to the "Baltic" and "Keedar," see Letter of the Secretary of War, dated Washington, March 26th, 1862; 37th Congress, Second Session, Senate: Ex. Doc., No. 37.

NOTE :

Average of my charters as above, is less than 62 cents per ton per day.

"	D. D. Tompkins' "		88	"	"
			<hr/>		

In my favor, - - 26 cents " "

STEAMERS CHARTERED BY THE QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT.

Steamer Dudley Buck,	tonnage	$280\frac{4}{9}\frac{3}{5}$,	at \$400	per day.
" George B. Collins,	"	234	400	"
" Albany,	"	$227\frac{3}{9}\frac{5}{5}$	250	"
" Jersey Blue,	"	$222\frac{1}{9}\frac{2}{5}$	250	"

Tons, $963\frac{9}{9}\frac{0}{5}$ at \$1300 "

I refer to charters on file at the Quartermaster's office, at Washington, for date in regard to steamers "Dudley Buck" and "George C. Collins," and of the "Albany" and "Jersey Blue," to Mr. Grimes' "Report in part" to the Senate, January 15th, 1863; 37th Congress, 3d Session, Senate: Rep. Com., No. 75, page 18; for the tonnage of these four boats, I refer to certificate of which the following is a copy:

CUSTOM HOUSE, NEW YORK, COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,

W. B. G.

April 2d, 1863.

I certify that it appears from the records of this office, that the tonnage of the following steamers are as follows: "Dudley Buck," $280\frac{4}{9}\frac{3}{5}$ tons; "George C. Collins," 234 tons; "Albany," $227\frac{3}{9}\frac{5}{5}$ tons; "Jersey Blue," $222\frac{1}{9}\frac{2}{5}$ tons.

Given under my hand and seal of office, the year and day above written.

G. P. STEDWELL,

[Custom House Seal, N. Y.]

D. Col.

STEAMERS CHARTERED OF THE PHILADELPHIA STEAM PROPELLER COMPANY, by Mr. JOHN TUCKER.

Steamer Thomas Sparks, tonnage 300, at \$145 per day.

" Sophia,	"	286,	145	"
" Planet,	"	282,	145	"
" Josephine,	"	254,	145	"

1122 \$580 "

Difference in favor of the Philadelphia Steam Propeller Company, in tonnage, by the above, is $185\frac{5}{9}\frac{5}{5}$ tons, and in pay for charter, is \$720 per day, or \$21,600 per month, or \$259,200 per annum.

The price and tonnage of the above named Steamers, belonging to the Phila. Steam Propeller Co., will be found in a letter of the Secretary of War, in answer to a "Resolution of the Senate, 37th Congress, Exec. Docu. No. 37."

NOTE.—The New York charters, as above, will average over 137 cents per ton, per day; the Philadelphia Steam Propeller Co. charters $51\frac{1}{6}$ cents per day.

Names of Steamers.	Dates of Charters. 1861.	Tons.	Rate of Charter		By whom Chartered.	On whose Recommendation.
			Per day.	Per month.		
Potomac,	Oct. 10,	460	\$350 00	\$10,500 00	Capt. Saxon, N. Y.	
Locust Point,	Oct. 10,	460	350 00	10,500 00	" "	
May Flower,	Oct. 14,	400	400 00	12,000 00	" "	
		1,320	1,100 00	\$33,000 00		
Thos. Swan,	Sept. 30,	460	\$265 80	\$7,975 00	John Tucker, Esq.	R. F. Loper.
George's Creek,	Oct. 14,	460	260 00	7,800 00	" "	" "
Patapsco,	Sept. 30,	454 ⁶⁹ / ₉₅	265 80	7,975 00	" "	" "
		1,374 ⁶⁹ / ₉₅	\$791 60	\$23,750 00		

The Potomac, Locust Point, and May Flower, were chartered, as above, by Captain Saxon, October 10th and 14th, 1861, and the Thos. Swan, George's Creek, and Patapsco, by John Tucker, Esq., by my recommendation, September 30th, and October 14th. All the above named steamers except the "May Flower," were built by me for the Parker Vein Steamship Company, and are of the same model, and their dimensions exactly alike, being similar to each other in every respect.

	Tons.	per day.	per mo.
Captain Saxon's charters,	1320	\$1,100	\$33,300
Charters by my recommendation,	1374 ⁶⁹ / ₉₅	791 ⁶⁰ / ₁₀₀	23,748
	54 ⁶⁹ / ₉₅	\$308 ⁴⁰ / ₁₀₀	\$ 9,252

Showing a difference in favor of the charters by my recommendation on three steamers of \$308⁴⁰/₁₀₀ per day, and \$9,252 per month; four of the above steamers have been employed by the Government over sixteen months, and a fair average of the whole six for twelve months would show a difference of *one hundred and eleven thousand and twenty-four dollars*.

Refer to Letter of the Secretary of War, date Washington, March 27th, 1862, 37th Congress, 2d Session, Senate: Ex. Doc., No. 37.

NOTE.—Captain Saxon's charters average 80¹/₃ cents per ton per day.
John Tucker's, Esq. charters, on my recom. 57²/₃ " "

STEAMERS CHARTERED IN PHILADELPHIA,

Examined and recommended by me to John Tucker, Esq., and belonging to Captain Wilmon Whilldin.

Steamer Pilot Boy,	256 tons, at \$145 per day.
“ George Washington,	378 “ 160 “
“ Phoenix,	154 “ 115 “
“ Pataxent,	265 “ 125 “
	—————
	1053 \$545

Refer to Letter of the Secretary of War, date Washington, March 27th, 1862; 37th Congress, 2d Session, Senate: Ex. Doc., No. 37.

CHARTERED IN NEW YORK.

Steamer J. Farron,	250 tons, at \$400 per day.
“ Ocean Wave,	290 “ 250 “
“ Peter G. Coffin,	263 “ 225 “
“ Island City,	218 “ 135 “
	—————
	1021 \$1010

These steamers were chartered for the McClellan Expedition.

Difference in favor of the above Philadelphia charters over the New York one stands as follows, viz: in tonnage, 32 tons; in the price per day, \$465; per month, \$13,950; and for one year, \$167,400.

NOTE.—The average of the Philadelphia charters as above, is under $51\frac{7}{10}$ cents per ton per day, and the average of the New York charters $98\frac{9}{10}$ cents per ton per day.

STEAMERS CHARTERED IN PHILADELPHIA.

Examined and recommended by me to the Government and owned by Anthony Reybold, Esq.

	Steamer Express,	382	tons, at \$175 per day.
*	" John Tucker,	481 $\frac{6}{9}$ $\frac{6}{5}$	" 300 "
	" W. Whilldin,	312 $\frac{4}{9}$ $\frac{4}{5}$	" 150 "
	" Star,	130	" 110 "
†	" Diamond State,	397	" 200 "
		<hr/> 1703	<hr/> \$935

See Mr. Grimes' Report, page 256, 37th Congress, 3d Session.

STEAMERS CHARTERED IN NEW YORK,

†	Steamer Honduras,	376	tons, at \$400 per day.
	" Nelly Baker,	303	" 350 "
	" William Kent,	411	" 700 "
	" Agnes,	125	" 175 "
	" Catskill,	450	" 400 "
		<hr/> 1665	<hr/> \$2025

McClellan's Expedition.

The above Philadelphia charters supply the Government with 38 $\frac{1}{9}$ $\frac{5}{5}$ tons more than the New York charters, and at a less price by \$1,090 per day, or \$32,700 per month, or \$392,400 per annum.

* Not recommended by me.

† This steamer was first chartered by Mr. Tucker for the "McClellan Expedition," but, after being considerably enlarged, was chartered by me to Major Van Vleit.

‡ Chartered by Captain R. Saxton.

NOTE.—Average of the above Philadelphia charters is less than 55 cents per ton per day; average of the New York charters over 121 cents per ton per day.

It is shown that by my Agency, under J. Edgar Thomson, Esq., and since that expired, by my recommendations of the various steamers, as set forth in this continuation of my Defence, there has enured to the Government a saving, as set forth in the following tables.—

	Saving per day.	Per Month.	Per Annum.	Excess of tonnage furnished.
Page 34,	\$1,003 00	\$30,090 00	\$361,080 00	367 tons.
“ 35,	720 00	21,600 00	259,200 00	158 $\frac{5}{9}$ “
“ 36,	308 40	9,252 00	111,024 00	54 $\frac{69}{95}$ “
“ 37,	465 00	13,950 00	167,400 00	32 “
“ 38,	1,090 00	32,700 00	392,400 00	38 $\frac{15}{95}$ “
Total,	\$3,586 40	\$107,592 00	\$1,291,104 00	676 $\frac{89}{95}$ tons.

Before closing, I will name one instance, out of many, wherein I have saved money for the Government.—

In March, 1862, when assisting in the examination of transports for the “McClellan Expedition,” at New York, Capt. R. Sturges, on behalf of the owners of the steamers “C. Vanderbilt” and “Commodore,” offered them for charter to Mr. John Tucker, at one thousand dollars per day each. They are fine large vessels, and Mr. Tucker was anxious to secure them for Gen. McClellan’s Head Quarters and Staff purposes,—the boats already chartered being too small for that service. Capt. Sturges was not authorized to name a less sum than that already mentioned, and Mr. Tucker and Captain Hodges concluded to charter them at that price. At my request, Mr. Tucker reserved his decision until I had an opportunity to confer with the owners. I took a carriage (at my own expense) to Mr. Daniel Drew’s (the owner) residence. This gentleman informed me that he could not take less than “\$1,000” per day for each boat; that they were newly furnished, painted, and put in complete order for their regular business. After a long conversation, in which I appealed to his patriotism, and urged him to do something for his country in the hour of need, he then and there agreed to charter to the Government the two steamers for \$800 per day each, and arranged to meet Mr. Tucker at Capt. Hodges’ office, at 10 o’clock the next day, close the bargain and sign the charters. At the time appointed, Mr. Tucker completed the transaction, and Capt. Hodges signed the necessary papers.

The boats were chartered for one month, and kept in the service for six months.

I certify that the above and within statement is true in every particular, so far as it relates to Capt. Loper’s conversation with me regarding the price of my

steamers, and that through his persuasion alone I reduced the price of the boats from one thousand dollars to eight hundred dollars per day.

(Signed)

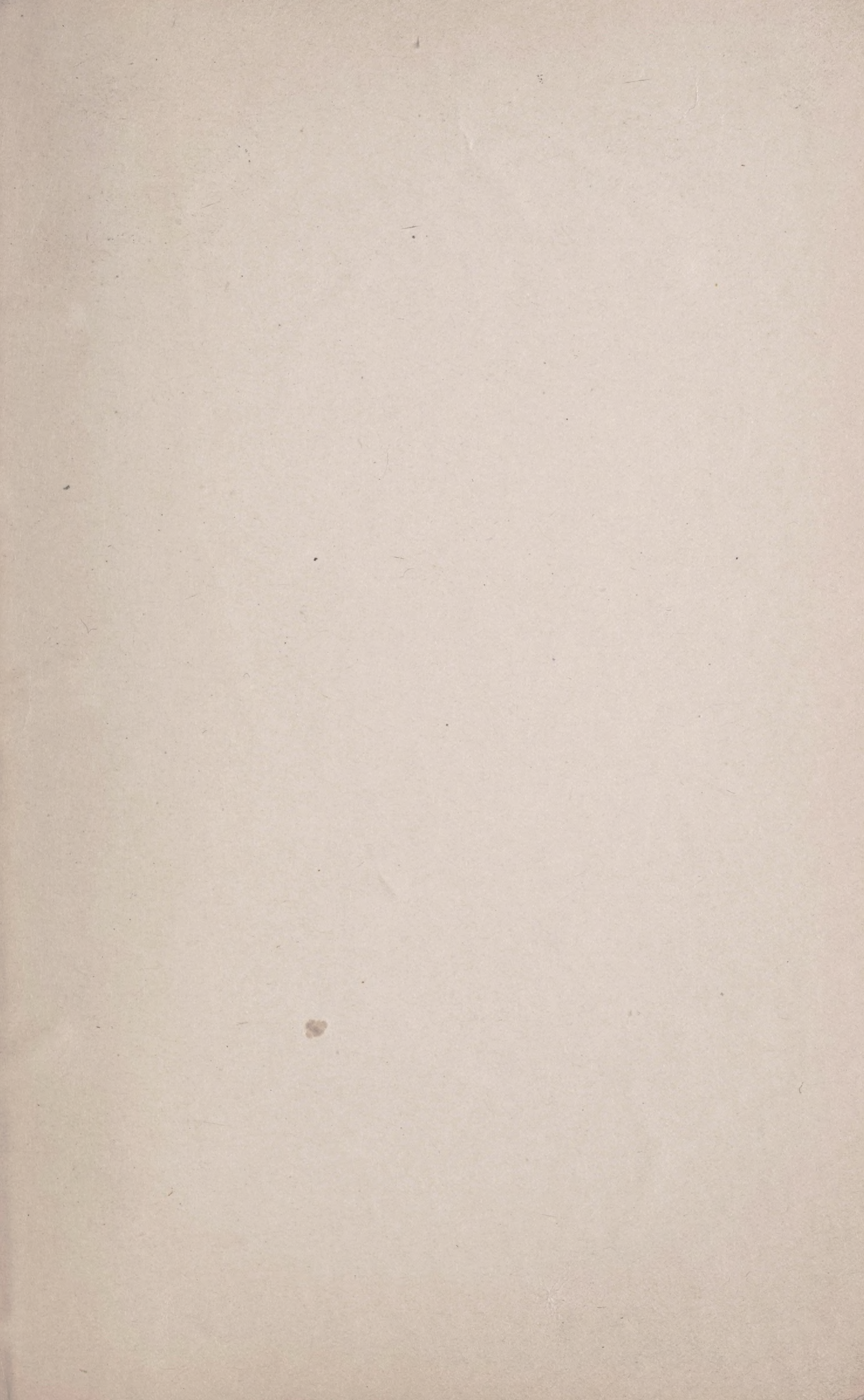
D. DREW.

The above letter shows that, by my exertions, there was a saving to Government of \$400 per day, and for the six months \$72,000.

In the foregoing statements, I have named all the steamers on which Mr. Grimes states I had made such large commissions. In the various comparisons, I have made selections from those engaged in the regular lines run by Government, and from those chartered for the Expeditions for Generals Sherman, Burnside, McClellan, and Banks. The average price paid for the vessels on which I received a commission for advances, collections, &c., is below 54 cents per ton per day. I confidently state, after most diligent examination, that during the last two years the Government has never chartered of others the same number of steamers at so low a rate, and *I believe* the prices paid to others will average at least one third more than for those with which I am identified.

I confidently submit the foregoing facts to the judgment of an intelligent community.

R. F. LOPER.



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